PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN JORDAN: RESPONDING TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

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Abstract: *The need for well trained teachers of English has grown sharply with the increasing importance of English as a Foreign/Second language in Jordan where the acquisition of the language is no longer confined to the social and academic lite. This paper delineates the three major sources of EFL teachers in Jordan, namely, Community Colleges, University English Departments and University Education Departments, and attempts to describe, and critically survey each of these programmes. Pre-service programmes are viewed in this paper to be more promising than the other programmes described here, more able to adjust to changing needs of the English teacher in Jordan, more flexible and more able to create new courses in the light of the latest research by both encouraging research inside Jordan and also by continuing to send some of the most able students to study for higher degrees overseas. What clearly emerges from this article is that there is a continual search in Jordan for improving the certification of qualified teachers of English. This search is unending, and it is confidently predicted that innovation will be part of future responses to staffing and expanding English courses in the schools.*

Introduction

Since the political independence of Jordan in 1946, English has grown in importance as a school subject, with its acquisition no longer being confined to the social and academic lite. Consequently, the need for well-trained teachers, skilled in the latest teaching methods, is also growing.

There are three major sources of EFL teachers in Jordan; namely Community Colleges, University English Departments and University Education departments. What follows is a descriptive and critical survey of each of these programmes.

Community colleges

A community college currently is a two year post-secondary educational institution offering both education and training for secondary school graduates,

preparing them for four main professional areas, namely, Teaching, Engineering, Business and Medicine. In 1980, these colleges replaced the traditional Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs). Before describing the curriculum programme in the Community Colleges, it is worth looking at the programmes in the TTIs which had supplied the largest number of teachers in general and teachers of English in particular.

Teacher training University-level education in Jordan expanded in line with general socio-economic development. National universities were established in Amman in 1962, Yarmouk in Irbid in 1976, Muta in Kerak in 1984, Al-Albayt University in 1991, Al-Hashimiyya, Mafraq in 1994. Before this, TTIs had offered the highest education in the country and used to attract the best secondary school graduates. TTI graduates used to and still constitute the majority of EFL teachers in the country. With most students now graduating from universities, graduates are assigned to teach in the post-compulsory Secondary Cycle while the graduates of TTIs are assigned to teach in the Pre-Secondary Compulsory Cycle.

The curriculum of the TTIs for those specialising in English required the trainee to take 79 credit hours over two years of which only 28 credit hours were allocated to English. These 28 hours included Language, Linguistics, Literature and Methodology. Of these, 14 hours were given to language skills, 2 hours to linguistics (phonology), 3 hours to literature, 4 hours to Methodology and 6 hours to Teaching Practice. The other 50 hours of the programme were allocated to general education and specific education courses which included courses on Islamic Religion (4 hours), Arabic (6 hours), Art Education (3 hours), Social Studies and Humanities (3 hours), Mathematics (3 hours), Science (3 hours), Physical Education (4 hours), Introduction to Education (2 hours), Educational Psychology (3 hours), Developmental Psychology (2 hours), Curriculum and General Methods (4 hours), Measurement and Evaluation (3 hours), Audio-Visual Aids (3 hours), Class Management and the Single Teacher School (2 hours).

Other than the 28 hours allocated to English, the rest of the courses were taught in Arabic, the native language.

There has been a consensus in the literature of teacher training in the Jordanian context that TTI graduates suffer mainly from a poor command of the language they have been trained to teach: (Salih, 1980; Shaker, 1982). The programme at TTIs was judged by the Ministry of Higher Education to have fallen short of realising the objectives of EFL teacher training. The widely held view that the competence of the TTI graduate lags behind what is expected from a teacher of English has often been put forward as a reason for the low level of a school students achievement in English as a spoken language (Nasr, 1967; Mukattash,

1978; Shaker, 1980; Awwad, 1980; Colbruth, 1980). Evidence drawn from proficiency testing of those graduates has consistently shown their poor command of the language. To give an indication of their level of proficiency in English, Shaker (1980) administered the Michigan Test of English Proficiency – a standardised test of English language proficiency normally given to foreign students intending to pursue an academic degree at American universities – to a sample of 119 teacher trainees at the end of their fourth semester. The average mean score of the sample was 41.2. According to the norms of the test, a minimum score of 82 is required before a student can take a regular academic load in the freshman year of an American University. The testing in 1980 corroborated the results of the same kind of testing conducted in 1966 by Nasr and in 1977 by Mukattash.

A programme associated with TTIs and which has its place in the educational planning for the country in the area of teacher training led to a diploma and was taught in the CITTI (Certification and In-service Teacher Training Institute). A comprehensive description of EFL teacher training in Jordan would be incomplete without the inclusion of this programme because it has produced a high percentage of teachers over the years. CITTI came into existence because of necessity after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war when there was an influx of tens of thousands of students to Jordan and there was an acute shortage of trained teachers, so that the Ministry of Education had to hire thousands of untrained teachers. By 1970-71, the Ministry had employed 6500 unqualified and untrained teachers. It sought the help of two international organisations, namely, the Ford Foundation and UNICEF. These funded the establishment of CITTI and provided the necessary training for the unqualified teachers while they continued in their full-time employment.

The CITTI curriculum was modelled upon that of the TTIs. The course components remained the same and only some minor modifications were made so that the trainees could find the necessary time to study without interfering with their full-time employment. The number of credits was exactly the same as in the TTIs. The CITTI training period lasted four semesters and two summer sessions. During the four semesters, the work took the form of self study carried out at home, and was supplemented by a weekly seminar led by the subject specialist to ensure the mastery of the material through explanation, discussion and testing. In the summer sessions, the trainee had to attend the Institute for six hours a day, six days a week, when instruction adhered closely to the traditional academic TTI format of lectures, demonstration classes, discussion and laboratory sessions. The assessment of CITTI graduates by researchers such as Duwaik (1980) and Abulfattaah (1980) consistently indicated that graduates suffered from a poor command of English and that they have had minimal training in EFL. Apparently,

little had changed in more than a decade, the pattern identified by Nasr (1967) still persisting.

1980 was a turning point in the history of TTIs. They were transformed into Community Colleges and their programmes started to change gradually from teacher training to professional training in general in order to recruit a wider range of student to make up for the loss of the highest students who were getting places in the new universities. The Teaching Profession became one field of specialisation in these colleges alongside other specialisations. With the fast growth of university education, Community Colleges had long since lost the glamour of the early TTIs and had started to attract only less qualified high school graduates who had failed to secure university admission in or outside Jordan. The teaching profession in general was also becoming much less attractive financially than it had been vis—vis other occupations. With the absence of the better candidates for EFL teaching, diminishing financial reward for teaching and a decreasing in the demand for EFL Community College graduates, the Ministry of Higher Education introduced a reform which arguably ought to have been taken twenty years earlier. It proposed a radical reform to upgrade the English language proficiency of the graduates. The tenor of the new wave of change was very well attested to in the first two assumptions of the Ministry of Higher Educations (1980:1) *English Language Curriculum for English Specialization in Community Colleges*, which states:

> A high level of language proficiency is a prerequisite for language teaching.
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> Students who join the Community Colleges have been exposed to basic and intermediate levels of English. Nevertheless, their actual command of the language does not meet the expectations of the compulsory school curricula. This makes it necessary to reinforce the material previously covered in the form of remedial work.

The English component started with an orientation course. The Ministry of Higher Education (1985) maintained that this was allotted a minimum of 10 class hours a week, but a college may at its discretion allot more time and/or extend the course to the second semester. The course aims at upgrading the level of the student teachers English language proficiency to enable them to follow and successfully complete the requirements of their specialisation. The Ministry (1985:7) recommended that 5 periods a week be given to general language work (reading and structure), 2 periods to writing, 2 periods to oral skills and 1 period to extensive reading. It shows realism when it states that:

> It is of crucial importance that the student teachers see the course as a new beginning rather as a continuation of their previous learning experience, which by and large was an experience in failing to master foreign language skills. We should therefore avoid: lecturing on the part of the teacher domination of class time by the teacher grammatical [sic] explanation a situation where the teacher asks questions and only the students answer them. Instead, most of the class time should be occupied by activities carried out by the students, with the teacher as guide and facilitator of learning.

The thinking of the Ministry of Higher Education in the plan to reform the EFL curriculum was never translated into practical steps for implementation. The Orientation Course which was supposed to be 10 hours a week in the first semester has never been implemented in any of the colleges for various reasons, the most important of which has been the controversy over whether it should be a credited or a non-credit course. The logistics of implementation impeded the plan and what went on was a return to a modification of the old programme which included 32 hours for English, to be taught in English, and 32 hours of general education to be taught in Arabic. Specifically, the new programme included 32 credit hours of English, 24 credit hours of Education and 8 hours of General Education.

The English component consisted of 16 courses, each worth 2 credit hours. These were: Reading and Comprehension (1), Reading and Comprehension (2), Grammar (1), Grammar (2), Pronunciation and Speech, Study Skills, Writing (1), Writing (2), Reading and writing, Methodology (1), Methodology (2), Oral Comprehension and expression, Literature, Language and Linguistics (1), Language and Linguistics (2,) Classroom Oral Skills.

24 credit hours were divided into two groups of 12 credit. One group included an introduction to education, curriculum and instruction, developmental psychology, educational psychology, educational technology, measurement and evaluation, administration and supervision, theoretical education and practicum. Students chose four courses from this range. The other group included social psychology, principles of descriptive statistics, environmental education, contemporary problems, physical education and first aid, general science, Arabic language, professional ethics, problems of the Arab world, and art education. Students chose four courses from this range.

The proposed language component of the curriculum represents a reaction to earlier criticisms and address the need for teachers of English to have English language proficiency levels. However, the programme is far from realistic in the area of English literature and urgently needs more emphasis (on the study of English literature), for example, English language through literary texts even in

the widest definition of literature. The curriculum is also unrealistic in its objectives for the literature component (one course, 2 credit hours) in which it is stated that the course aims at reading and enjoying literary works; understanding the characteristics of the main literary genres, in particular novel and drama; appreciating, analysing and evaluating literary works; and acquiring a reasonable knowledge of western thought and culture as reflected in literary works. All this is expected through reading one twentieth century novel and one twentieth century play.

The improvement in the attainment standards of the graduates of this programme, if there was any, was not felt in the field. In fact, systematic evaluation of the proficiency levels of the graduates tended to corroborate the results of the earlier studies. Obeidat (1985) studied samples of trainees from six government and private community colleges and concluded that, especially in the case of the government college trainees, performance on the tests was poor (average mean score was 59 on a test whose passing grade is 60). Obeidat attributed these results to the lack of interest and motivation on the part of the trainee resulting from dissatisfaction with the teaching profession.

The curriculum of the English specialisation course in the Community Colleges was subjected to a re-examination in 1988 and was further modified in order to implement some of the earlier thinking of the Ministry of Higher Education. The change was directed along the lines of the university departments of English; and this will be discussed later. The education content, including some of the most important components of the EFL curriculum, namely the EFL methodology courses, was eradicated from the syllabus and replaced by two courses in English literature, because this was felt to be more helpful to the intending teachers. General education courses in Arabic were reduced to minimum (10 credit hours in the program). New courses in translation were introduced and some of the general courses which had been taught in Arabic were than offered in English.

The overall result is a programme of 67 credit hours, 57 of which are in English. The 57 credits are made up as follows: General English (3 hours), Listening Comprehension 1 (3 hours), Listening Comprehension 2 (3 hours), Reading 1 (3 hours), Reading 2 (3 hours), Writing 1 (3 hours), Writing 2 (3 hours), Grammar 1 (3 hours), Grammar 2 (2 hours), Oral Skills 1 (3 hours), Oral Skills 2 (3 hours), Study Skills (2 hours), Introduction to linguistics (3 hours), Translation from English into Arabic (2 hours), Translation from Arabic into English (3 hours), Literary appreciation (3 hours), Fiction (3 hours), Drama (3 hours), Introduction to Arabic-Islamic Culture (3 hours), Selected Readings in Western Civilisation (3 hours).

The only courses taught in Arabic are: Studies in Arabic and Islamic Thought (3 hours), Development in the Arab World (3 hours), Arabic Language (3 hours), Physical Education (1 hour).

There is no doubt that this programme is much more responsive to the language proficiency needs of the prospective EFL teacher. There are extensive opportunities to build up this proficiency. The language component is well supplemented by three literature courses. However, it is very difficult to explain the absence of the two methodology courses and the teaching practice. Apparently, the explanation lies in the Community Colleges being more concerned with offering professional training in its widest sense than with the preparation of teachers alone. The trainee in English specialisation at a Community College does not have to go into teaching, and can go into any other profession which needs this kind of command of English.

The Ministry of Education in Jordan no longer has a great need of teachers of English graduating from two year training programmes, because of the availability of university graduates in the market. Community Colleges are now in decline, and they have lost their earlier attraction. This is because of the availability of places in more prestigious (not necessarily more needed or more efficient) institutions. At one time, the national universities could take only a few thousand from the 30,000 to 40,000 of high school graduates. Those who could not secure university admission enrolled in Community Colleges. For that reason, the private sector was able to expand and no less than 30 private community colleges sprang in the major cities in the country. These colleges flourished in terms of student enrollment and financial profits. The Jordanian government in the very early 1990s allowed the establishment of private profit-making universities. Funded by educational investment companies and motivated by their being relatively lucrative businesses, these universities attracted students from the community colleges. The first private university started taking students in 1990. There are currently ten private universities in the country, charging very high fees almost five to six times higher than the government universities. Parents in Jordan, for mainly social and economic reasons, tend to go out of their way to secure university education for their children. The only way to university education for those not admitted to governmental universities is to pay the high fees and enrol in a private university.

University departments of English language and literature

The Jordanian universities are now the main source of teachers in the country. Two programmes in Jordanian universities will be discussed in this section. The first is the traditional programme in English language and literature offered in the Departments of English, and the second is a teacher education programme named the field specialist, offered jointly by the departments of education and English

language and literature. To make this study comprehensive, a third programme will also be discussed, namely the in-service training programme along the lines of the field specialist, entitled Teacher Qualification Programme. This programme will be considered in a similar fashion to that of CITTI discussed earlier.

The main division and distribution of hours over the four years of study and the content areas of the courses offered are described. These programmes at different universities are not exactly the same, but, in their design, they follow the same principles and the differences between them are minor. Some of the more recent private universities have made further attempts to change more substantively, but change is difficult because the body responsible for accreditation is the Ministry of Higher Education, as well as its personnel, are a product of state universities. This description applies to the programmes in both the 5 national universities, and the 8 private Universities.

The Bachelor of Arts degree in English language and literature (Department of English, Yarmouk University, 1995) requires the completion of 132 credit hours, of which 96 hours in English are for single majors and 75 hours in English for double majors, i.e.: a major in English and a minor in another field. The other 36 hours are divided equally between university requirements and college requirements. University requirements are specified by the University Council and the College requirements are determined by the College Council. The 18 credit hour University requirements include 9 compulsory hours in English, Arabic, and Military Sciences, and 9 elective hours chosen from groups of courses offered by colleges other than the College of Arts (i.e. the undergraduate section of the university). The college requirements include courses in the history of Jordan and the Arab World, Arabic and Islamic culture Art and Sociology.

The English part of the programme consists of three main components:

1. The language component. This consists of a number of courses in general communication skills, traditional grammar of English, writing at the paragraph and then essay levels, translation from English into Arabic and translation from Arabic into English.

2. The Literature component. This is the most important component in terms of the number of the courses offered in the programme. This has been designed to cover English literature in its different periods and genres, from Chaucer to the present. The list of courses at Yarmouk University for example (Yarmouk University Catalogue 1995:165-168) includes such course titles as Introduction to the Study of Literature, Survey of British Literature, Survey of American Literature, Introduction to Critical literary theory, Rise of British Prose through Austin, British Prose 1830-1930, Modern American Prose,

Medieval English Poetry, Poetry from the Beginnings till 1798, English Poetry from the Romantic Period to the Present, Shakespeare and the Renaissance Drama, Modern British and American Drama, Contemporary Anglo-American Prose, Literature in Translation, Studies in Genre (A. the short story, B. the epic, C. the lyric, D. the essay, and E. the tragedy), Major Author, Special Topic in Literature and Research in Literature.

3. The Linguistics Component. More Jordanians graduate in Linguistics from American and British universities, (given the absence of a Department of Linguistics in the country), so more courses are finding their way out the programme. These courses include Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, Transformational syntax, language Planning, Semantics, Phonetics and Phonology and Advanced Phonetics.

Pratt (1982) maintained that the structure of the Departments of English Language and Literature in Jordanian universities – whether government or private – had been either inherited or partly borrowed. When the first such department in the Arab world was established at King Fahad University in Cairo in 1908, it was modelled upon departments in British universities where the literature component stood out as the main thrust. When other departments in other Arab in countries were established, the Egyptian model was imitated. These departments have hardly changed in their basic structure in other than the addition of the linguistics component.

A critical examination of the curriculum shows imbalances, false assumptions and lack of direction. The aspect of training which is most needed is the language component and yet this component is the weakest in the curriculum. In an international conference commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the department of English language and literature at the University of Jordan in Amman, Ibrahim (1983:23) describes this component as follows.

> Although most of our students are deficient in the basic language skills when they join the department, we have not yet succeeded in offering them an integrated set of language courses to improve their proficiency significantly. ... But nothing is offered to help them become better and more fluent speakers of English.
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> To my mind, the language component is the weakest of our three components. It is the component in which contradictions in the realities of our situation can be seen most clearly. Since language is,

among other things, a tool and a key, it is unrealistic for us to expect any meaningful teaching or learning to take place in the other two components if the students are deficient in basic language skills.

The weak language component may account for the inability of the student to deal with the institutionalised English literature syllabus. The language component is the most needed because of the ever-increasing role of English in Jordan and the Arab world. As El-Mowafy (1983:11) put it in the same seminar,

> In the past, the Arabs needed the English language because of their special political relation with Britain. Now they need it even more not only because it is the language of the British and the English speaking world but because it has become a lingua franca indispensable in conducting diplomacy, business and other practical transactions with the whole world. Although many educational institutions, other than university ones, have proved very successful in providing their students with basic skills of the English language, it is still conceded that one of the primary functions of a university department of English is to improve its students' standard of English.

The linguistics component which has been growing in size has also been questioned. Ibrahim (1983) maintains that it is incongruous and the only reason for its placement in the department of English is because no Arab university has created a free-standing department of linguistics, so graduates of linguistics department are automatically placed in the department of English. Zughoul (1983) points out that a good training in linguistics is no substitute for training in language teaching. In fact a number of linguists in the departments of English are neither trained nor motivated to be language teachers.

There has been no systematic follow-up or evaluation of the graduates of the department of English who are becoming the main source of pre-serve teachers for the schools in Jordan and other Arab countries. The scanty research evidence available consistently indicate that the graduates competence in the language on average leaves much to be desired. Ibrahim (1983:25) evaluates those graduates as follows:

> I should think that most of us are not totally happy with the quality of English our graduates leave us. We are constantly subjected to embarrassment when we are asked by the principal of a private school or a business manager to recommend to him one of

> our graduates, with the understanding that the graduate should have a good command of English for the job waiting him or her. There have been cases when in all honesty, I could not recommend any of our graduates for that year.

Motivated and inspired by some systematic follow-up studies of university graduates conducted in America, Abu-Hamdia informally solicited the views of some of the employers of the graduates of the department of English at the University of Jordan. He had in mind the question of how the English departments curriculum could be modified to meet the needs of the graduates without prejudice to what constitutes the core of an English department. His conclusion is revealing.

> In this survey, no divergence of views was discerned as to the inadequacy of the preparation of English Department students in the communicative skills, both written and oral called for by the job requirements (to many of us this sounds like stating the obvious). Other deficiencies that emerged from the survey reveal that the students on the whole 1) are instructor dependent...2) compartmentalise course content and skills with little integration...3) are textbook dependent...4) do not develop an awareness and functional use of the differences between language varieties, confusing spoken and written, formal and informal and standard and colloquial- on the whole speaking a hybrid quality of English that is attitudinal invariant to them.

These conclusions were corroborated by Bader (1990) and Saleh (1989).

It is very important to state that, despite fewer than 70% of the graduates of the English departments opting for the teaching profession and a far higher percentage in earlier times joining the educational system in its private and public sectors, an integral component of teacher preparation remains for no good reason completely absent from the curriculum of these departments. The programme has not included any course on TEFL methodology, syllabus design, practice teaching, classroom interaction, language acquisition or the problems of teaching/learning English as a foreign language. When professors in these departments are asked about this, they reveal the attitude that any course of any relevance to pedagogy should fall outside these departments. Even at the time when some students in these departments and mainly those who were on full Ministry of Education scholarships could register for a minor in Education where they took 21 credit hours of education courses, the minor programme in education was completely stopped in order to force students to register for a post-graduate diploma in

education. Interestingly enough, the English major can still take a minor in business or economics.

The curriculum of the English Department in Arab Universities has been a subject of heated debate, especially in relation to the issue of pre-service training for teachers. Evidence about the efficiency of these departments is always based on responses from teachers in schools. This heated debate culminated in a number of conferences in Arab Universities. In 1981 the First National symposium on English Teaching in Egypt was organised by the Center for Developing English Language Teaching at Ain Shams University. The Conference on the *Problems of Teaching English Language and Literature at Arab Universities* was organised by the Department of English at the University of Jordan in 1982. A third conference, entitled *Departments of English in the Arab World: Aims and Policies Revisited,* was called for by the Association of Arab universities and was held at the United Arab Emirates University (1982). Despite this, no change has taken place in these departments and the same issues are continually raised and re-discussed, but recommendations have not been implemented.

The Education-English in-service and pre-serve field teacher programmes

The reason the Education-English in-service programme is described first is because this programme serves as a nucleus and as a base for the development of the pre-serve Field Teacher programme.

In its attempts to upgrade the qualifications of teachers in service, the Ministry of Higher Education started a massive in-service training programme in collaboration with the Jordanian national universities in 1985. The programme has aimed at re-training thousands of teachers and accrediting this training in fulfillment of the requirements of a Bachelor of Education degree from the national universities. This re-training includes teachers of all school subjects and one of these subjects is English. In its original plan, the programme targeted teachers who graduated from the two year Teacher Training Institutes and the Community Colleges. Teachers who were selected attended evening or late afternoon classes held in the community colleges in the beginning stages of the programme and later in universities. The candidates did not have to pay any tuition fees. Upon the completion of the programme, the teachers status was re-considered in the light of the new qualification. Moreover, the giving of a university degree itself is a prime motivation for teachers because Jordanian society values highly a university education, and more specifically a university degree. The programme has another attractive and motivating feature; it transfers

48 credit hours from the work completed at the Teacher Training Institute or a Community College and counts them towards the degree, asking the candidate to complete a further 84 credit hours to get the B.Ed. degree. Normally, the admission policy in Jordanian universities does not allow TTI or Community College graduates to continue their education at university level because university admission is wholly based on the scores of the candidate in the General Secondary School Examination (Tawjihi). In other words, if TTI or Community College graduates want to continue their education at the university, they will have to compete with high school graduates based on their own high school average attainment and if they are admitted they have to start as freshman students from scratch. This is why the new B.Ed programme is very attractive to the serving qualified but non-graduated teachers.

The overall requirements for the B.Ed programme is 132 credit hours, 48 of which will have been completed in the TTI or Community College. The trainee has to complete the remaining 84 hours according to the Study Plan (Department of Education, 1988) by studying three main groups of courses.

1. The requirements for the Academic Specialisation (84 credit hours) are (i) English language, (ii) English literature and (iii) Linguistics. The language component, (as opposed to the programme of the department of English), is the dominant component. It includes courses in reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking, advanced reading, vocabulary building, English grammar, functional grammar, paragraph and essay writing, pronunciation and expression, translation and stylistics. The literature component consists of four courses in the novel, poetry, drama, and the short story in addition to a course in literary criticism. The linguistics component is similar to that in the department of English and includes courses on introduction to linguistics, semantics, discourse analysis, contrastive linguistics, morphology and syntax.

2. The educational component (9 credit hours) includes three courses in theoretical teaching methodology, syllabus design and theories of learning. Apparently, no evaluation of the programme or the graduates of this programme has been made or published. The only feedback available to the author was obtained from some faculty members who taught the programme. The programme looks much better than that of the department of English in that it seems to cater for the actual pedagogical needs of a school teacher. The language component is duly emphasised, students are familiarised with the methods of teaching, and they have field experience. The literature component supports the language component and does not dominate it. On the whole, the programme seems to address the professional needs of teachers who want make a career in the teaching of English as a foreign language in Jordan.

Has the programme been achieving its objectives? It would appear to be achieving these objectives better and better with time. There was a consensus among those who have been teaching the programme that the early groups of trainees had not been the best of candidates. They had been old in terms of age (40-50), had had families and children, had been less motivated, and had been more interested in paper qualifications than in doing serious hard work. At a later stage the percentage of younger, more energetic and more highly motivated candidates achieved a sharp increase in overall attainment level. The quality showed much improvement. Eight of these trainees were interviewed, and they completed questionnaire. From discussions with them, it seemed that 50% of those finishing the programme this year are impressive both in their language proficiency and awareness of major practical issues in EFL methodology and classroom interaction. The training of that generation is almost completed and the new groups are younger and more enthusiastic.

The Education-English pre-service B.Ed. (Field teacher programme)

Another Ministry of Education plan, in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and the national universities, is entitled the Field Teacher. Its major aim is to graduate professional teachers who have mastered the content area and have been trained in teaching it. The training is provided by the specialised (subject content) department and the department of education. Some subjects have been selected as major areas in the first phase of this project and these include Arabic, English, Fine Arts Sciences and Computers. The programme was started in the academic year 1992/93 and the first cohort will graduate in late 1996/1997.

The B.Ed pre-service programme is very similar to the in-service programme. It is exactly the same in its offering in the area of specialisation. The requirements amount to 142 credit hours divided into three main components (Department of Education, Yarmouk University 1994). These are (i) the University requirements (18 credit hours), 9 of which are obligatory (English, Arabic and general science), while 9 are electives, chosen from different colleges of the university; (ii) English, the requirements for academic specialisation, with 75 credit hours including courses in language literature and linguistics. The language component is given due emphasis and dominates the other two components. These requirements are the same as those of the in-service programme and they have been described in detail in the previous section; (iii) The educational component of the programme of 39 credit hours is offered by the college of education. This component, in addition to the structure of the syllabus of English, differentiates the English B.Ed

pre-service programme from that of BA in English language and literature. It also differentiates the pre-service programme from the in-service programme where it is eliminated on the assumption that in-service teachers have covered this com ponent in the Teacher Training Institutes and Community Colleges. This part of the curriculum consists of 21 obligatory hours in basic Education, 6 hours in Methodology, and 12 hours of Education to be elected from a group of Education courses. The first category (21 obligatory hours) includes courses in Practicum, Curriculum Planning and Development, Production of Audio-Visual Aids, Introduction to Educational Psychology, Teen-Age Psychology, Principles of Educational Measurement and Evaluation. Two courses in methodology are included in the second category: Methods of teaching English as a Foreign Language 1 (Theoretical) and Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language 2 (Practical). The category of electives includes 12 hours to be selected from Philosophical and Social Foundations of Education, the Educational System in Jordan, Computers in Education, Environmental Education, Islamic Educational Thought, Introduction to Advising and Counselling, Behaviour Modification, General Teaching Methodology, and Classroom Management.

Since the first graduates of the pre-service B.Ed. programme will not appear till the end of 1996, the field teacher programme has not been evaluated and it is unlikely that it is going to be so in the near future because there has been no systematic evaluation of any of the earlier teacher training programmes for sometime. However, based on the writers first hand experience at the time of the field work being conducted with a number of students and staff members in the programme at Yarmouk University, it can be ascertained that the field teacher pre-service training programme in English as a foreign language is promising indeed, and it is likely to prove to be far superior to any other teacher training programme the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Higher Education have ever tried.

This promise is due to a number of very strong basic features that other programmes have never incorporated. Most important among these strong features are:

1. The trainees potential, attitudes and motivation. The candidates in this programme, are young high school graduates with very high academic grades in Tawjihi. The admission of the student to this programme is subject to the admission policy of the Jordanian national universities which is based on a stratified competitive system wholly based on the grades obtained in tawjihi. In fact, in comparison with those admitted to Community Colleges, for example, the trainees in the field teacher programme form the other extreme end of the scale. Those trainees have very good general potential. They seem to be motivated and they seem to develop a positive attitude towards the teaching

profession. They are psychologically prepared to become teachers and they see the relevance of the courses offered. The trainee in the pre-service programme offered by the department of English may consider teaching as career option, but may be more willing in due course to take a job other than teaching.

2. The curriculum of the field teacher pre-service programme is far superior to any other programme tried earlier. An critical look at the curriculum (Department of Education 1994) shows that, in contrast to the pre-service programme offered by the departments of English, the components are much more balanced, logical and potentially fruitful as critical look at the course offerings shows real tendencies towards building proficiency in the language before the student is asked to consider institutionalised literature syllabus. The linguistics component seems to be more responsive to the needs of the trainee rather than a reflection of what the faculty members in the department want to teach.

3. An Education component is completely absent from the traditional pre-service programme offered by the departments of English. The Education component includes an introduction to almost all that a trainee needs in order to build up professional competence as a prospective teacher of English as a Foreign language in Jordan. The facilities at the College of Education allow for the realisation of these objectives. With funding of educational projects through loans from the World Bank, Jordanian universities have been able to build spacious modern buildings in the colleges of Education furnish than with impressive facilities.

For these reasons, the field teacher pre-service programme would seem to be more promising than the other programmes described here, more able to adjust to changing needs of the English teacher in Jordan, and more flexible and more able to create new courses in the light of the latest research by both encouraging research inside Jordan and also by continuing to send some of the most able students to study for higher degrees overseas. There has not been space in the article to explore a widely held view in Jordan that teachers of English are more likely than teachers of other subjects to use more modern, less didactic teaching methods, or to consider why this might be so since they follow few courses in EFL teaching as such and undertake Educational and professional studies alongside students training to be teachers of other subjects. What clearly emerges from this article is that there is a continual search in Jordan for improving the certification of qualified teachers of English. This search is unending, and it is confidently predicted that innovation will be part of future responses to staffing an expanding range of English courses in the schools.

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